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ABSTRACT

The eight articles in this journal issue focus on vocabulary skills. The topics covered are semantic feature analysis, the use of highway survival terms in a vocabulary list, making vocabulary interesting to secondary students, word lists, the use of newspapers in creating vocabulary lists, six strategies underlying effective vocabulary programs, vocabulary instruction at the technical school, and semantics for teenagers. Regular journal features include a review of research on vocabulary and memory, a discussion of the role of parents in child language development, a list of vocabulary materials available to teachers, and reviews of professional materials. (FL)

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WISCONSIN STATE READING ASSOCIATION JOURNAL

Volume 23 Number 2
January, 1979

Theme: Focus on Vocabulary Skills

Ms. Suzanne Jund
Editor

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WISCONSIN STATE READING ASSOCIATION JOURNAL
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

The following information is from a Department of Public Instruction news release entitled, "State Plan For Career Education Contributes to All Disciplines."

Wisconsin now has a comprehensive State Plan for Career Education which was developed over the past two years. The major emphasis of the plan is to enhance the existing curricula through the infusion of career education rather than treating career education as "an add-on" to ongoing instructional programs.

Briefly, the five volumes of the State Plan for Career Education include the following: Volume I provides an introduction and definition of Career Education in Wisconsin. Volume II describes the State Level Plan for Career Education. Guidelines for development of local plans for career education are provided in Volume III. Career Education resources are summarized in Volume IV. Volume V includes instruments and information for measuring the impact of career education efforts.

Career Education Incentive Act

To help implement State Plans, the Career Education Incentive Act has received funding to the extent of $32.5 million as the first year's appropriation. As soon as federal guidelines are received at the Department of Public Instruction, guidelines will be prepared for LEAs. Eighty percent of the K-12 portion the first year and 85% the second through the fifth year will go to local school districts.

Companion Publications

The following publications will also help schools and communities implement a career education approach to

guidance and instruction:

1. Revised K-12 Guide for Integrating Career Education with Local Curriculum.
2. Wisconsin Career Guidance Model.
3. Career Guidance Resource Manual, Volume I.
4. Wisconsin Career Education Needs Assessment and Survey of Resources Handbook.
5. A Kit of Career Education Assessment and Evaluation Instruments.

The State Plan and the above publications are available from the Instructional Services Division of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. In addition, the Wisconsin Career Information System can be obtained from the Wisconsin Vocational Studies Center, U. W. --Madison.

Assistance Available

During the coming year, staff from the Department of Public Instruction together with experienced local practitioners will be available to assist with conference sectionals or workshops on the integration of career education with reading as well as other disciplines, and anyone desiring such assistance can write or call Robert Meyer at DPI, 608-266-8837. Technical assistance to schools and community organizations will also be available.

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WSRA President

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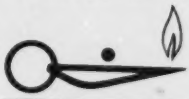

EDPRESS

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BACK COPIES may be obtained from the Editor for $2.00 each post paid.

Correspondence on editorial matters and manuscripts may be sent to:

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NAMES in the NEWS

The members of the Nominations Committee, Joyce Kieslich, Chairperson, present the following candidates for WSRA office for 1979-80:

Vice President - Elect:
Douglas Vance (Madison Area Reading Council)
Dr. Robert McKeag (Oshkosh Reading Council)

Treasurer:
Laura Holmgren (Waukesha County Reading Council)

Recording Secretary:
Rhodene Wolbrink (Headwaters Reading Council)
Maybelle Adashun (Rock River Reading Council)

Corresponding Secretary:
Melva Kleist (Central Wisconsin Reading Council)
Judith Casey (Milwaukee Area Reading Council)

Doug Vance

Robert McKeag

DOUGLAS VANCE

Currently employed as a reading consultant at Madison East High School, Doug defines his job as "working with teachers to encourage students to read widely, and helping teachers give students the skills they need to read well." He has been active on Madison area reading committees dealing with K-12 reading curriculum and evaluation projects. He is currently completing his doctoral work at the UW in Madison.

Doug was treasurer and president of the Madison Area Reading Council. In addition, he is the chairman of the WSRA's legislative committee and research editor of the WSRA Journal. Doug has been active in the IRA and the National Council of Teachers of English and has spoken at IRA conventions in New York, Miami, Indianapolis, and Cincinnati. In April, 1979 Doug will co-chair a preconvention institute at the IRA convention in Atlanta.

DR. ROBERT McKEAG

Dr. McKeag teaches reading and educational psychology courses at the University of Wisconsin--Oshkosh. where he also works with graduate students and with student teachers. Before coming to Wisconsin, Dr. McKeag taught at the high school level in Minnesota for eleven years.

Dr. McKeag is a past president of the Oshkosh Area Reading Council and is active as the chairman of WSRA's Committee on Certification. Dr. McKeag is a member of the IRA and of other professional organizations.

MRS. LAURA HOLMGREN

Mrs. Holmgren is the current WSRA treasurer. A reading specialist with a special interest in education for gifted students, Mrs. Holmgren has also been active in the Waukesha County Reading Council. Mrs. Holmgren has been a speaker and lecturer on reading instruction at local, state, and national conferences. Before becoming WSRA's treasurer Mrs. Holmgren had served on the state Legislative Committee.

RHODENE WOLBRINK

After teaching first and third grades in Lansing, Michigan, Rhodene (Deanie) Wolbrink moved to Phelps, Wisconsin. In Phelps her current teaching duties include Reading Specialist K-12, Title I Director, and Right to Read Director. Ms. Wolbrink is a member of the Headwaters Reading Council, the IRA, and is a member of WSRA's Membership Committee.

Ms. Wolbrink has been active in non-educational organizations such as the Michigan Heart Association and the American Cancer Society of Michigan. She has also written articles for local Michigan and Wisconsin newspapers.

MRS. MAYBELLE ADASHUN

A trained Laubach Literary tutor and Title I diagnostic/remedial teacher in Campbellsport, Mrs. Maybelle Adashun is also involved in constructing a language arts curriculum. Mrs. Adashun has taught all grades and also works with various adult basic education projects.

Mrs. Adashun has been active in the IRA and is a past president of the Rock River Council. She has worked for the Campbellsport Education Association and cooperated with other local projects such as the Cancer Drive. In the fall of 1976, Mrs. Adashun was named "Outstanding Woman of the Year" by the Fond du Lac Business and Professional Women.

MRS. MELVA KLEIST

An elementary classroom teacher for eighteen years and remedial reading teacher and reading consultant for twelve years, Mrs. Melva Kleist has been active in local and state reading associations for many years. Mrs. Kleist is a past president of the Central Wisconsin Reading Council and has been a member of WSRA's Right to Read Committee for eight years. Mrs. Kleist is an active member of IRA.

Mrs. Kleist has conducted sectional meetings at local conferences and represented the Midwestern States

on a panel at a national ASCD Study Institute in Chicago in 1976. Currently, Mrs. Kleist is serving as Reading Consultant and member of the administrative staff for the Weyauwega-Fremont Public Schools.

MRS. JUDITH CASEY

Since 1960 when she earned her B.S. in education from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Mrs. Judy Casey has taught grades Nursery-8 in four states. For the past four years Mrs. Casey has served as the K-12 Reading Coordinator for Oconomowoc Public Schools. Mrs. Casey has taught reading courses at UW--Milwaukee, Alverno College, and Marquette University.

A member of IRA and WSRA, Mrs. Casey also serves as the Executive Secretary and Membership Chairman of the Wisconsin Elementary Kindergarten Nursery Educators for the past three years. In 1979-80 Mrs. Casey will be president of the Milwaukee Area Reading Council. In addition to these teaching experiences, Mrs. Casey has written articles for the WSRA Journal, Barnell Loft, Thrust, and The MARC.

WISCONSIN STATE READING ASSOCIATION

presents

SPRING CONFERENCE 1979

On April 6-7, 1979 the WSRA will sponsor its annual spring reading conference at the Sheraton Inn in Madison. The workshops, meetings, and sessions will be devoted to the topic, "Reading: A Total Program K-12." Conference Coordinator, Dr. David Gustafson, states that this year's program will be patterned after the highly successful 1978 convention. Those attending the conference will have the opportunity to communicate with such noted reading educators as Dick Boning, Dr. Beryl Steadman Caffrey, Marya Woolwine, Dr. James Squire, Dr. Day Ann McClenathan, Dr. Charles Reasoner, and Dr. John Manning. Many noted Wisconsin reading educators will also share their expertise with the conferees.

A special feature of the conference will be a series of presentations designed for elementary principals, reading specialists, and other administrators attempting to comply with Wisconsin's recent reading legislation. The series will be presented by Dr. Peggy Ransom from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. Dr. Ransom is a nationally known speaker and consultant. Through filmstrips, simulations, films, and lectures, Dr. Ransom will describe the nature of reading, approaches to reading, needs assessment, program planning, assessment and evaluation, and community involvement.

The conference will begin on Friday afternoon and the first major event will be a banquet at 6:00 p.m. The guest speaker will be a representative from Reading is Fundamental which has headquarters in Washington, D.C. Following the banquet there will be a reception from 9:30--midnight featuring the LOST CENTURY JAZZ BAND. Wisconsin reading teachers will recognize the band's leader and arranger, Dr. Ken Dulin, and the tuba player, Dr. Dale Johnson, who are both reading professors at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. WSRA member, Verna Wenzel, often sings with the group.

A full day of presentations is planned for Saturday, April 7. The concluding address of the conference will be delivered by Dr. John Manning at 2:15 p.m. The topic of Dr. Manning's address is "Close Encounters of the First, Second, and Third Kinds." According to Conference Coordinator, Dr. Gustafson, the presentations by noted experts, the workshops and sectionals by experts from all over Wisconsin, the exhibits by professional bookmen, and the opportunity to socialize with colleagues will make this a worthwhile experience for all who attend.

For additional conference information contact:

Dr. David Gustafson
UW-La Crosse
106 Morris Hall
La Crosse, WI 54601

Semantic Feature Analysis: A Powerful Way to Expand Vocabulary

by

Dale D. Johnson
Professor
The University of Wisconsin
Madison

Reading teachers have long known that fluent reading and the size of one's vocabulary are positively correlated. On the other hand, children who do not know many words or who have not acquired the means of learning new words cannot read very well. Considerable research, beginning with that reported by Davis in 1944, has shown that the knowledge of word meanings makes a potent contribution to reading comprehension. Teachers are well aware of the importance of a strong, expanding reading vocabulary and of their role in helping children develop this through direct vocabulary instruction and through instruction in the independent skills of word identification--phonic, structural, and contextual analysis.

Reading comprehension involves processing textual material and integrating it with the experiences, knowledge, and attitudes already in our mind. Comprehending is, in essence, building bridges from the new to the known. To make this possible, individuals possess multiple sets of overlapping semantic categories, "rules" for specifying membership in categories and procedures for interrelating categories. The "rules" for specifying categories are nothing more than semantic features (big, large, huge, enormous) and the relationship of categories is determined by shared semantic features. An instructional practice which capitalizes on this integral aspect of human learning and behavior, and which has considerable potential for

greatly expanding one's vocabulary in a logical and sensible way, is semantic feature analysis.

Practically speaking there is no such thing as an identical synonym. No two words have exactly the same range of meaning, for if they did, one would likely fall out of use. As the language has developed and expanded, certain words have come to replace others, and some words have taken on new meanings.

But it is very important for children to grasp the fact that the term synonym refers to "something-like," not "the same as." Until one clearly realizes this fact, a good deal of semantic precision is lost to children, both as they read and write. I have found semantic feature analysis a worthwhile activity for two reasons. First, it helps to demonstrate clearly the uniqueness of each individual word and, second it is useful for direct instruction to add "something--like" synonyms to the individual's vocabulary.

Semantic feature analysis is a simple procedure. Begin with a list of known words which share some properties. For example, one might begin with types of conveyances if the words are known to the children: bicycle, motorcycle, car, skateboard. These words are listed in a column on the chalkboard or on paper. Next, have the children suggest features that at least one of the words usually possesses. These features are listed in a row across the top of the board or paper. Then have the children fill in the matrix by putting pluses or minuses beside each word under each feature as is shown below.

The use of pluses (+) and minuses (-) indicates whether or not a word usually has a given feature even though many features of words are not truly dichotomous, but rather exist in varying degrees. As children learn to read better and become more skilled with feature analysis it is appropriate to substitute a scale of numbers (Lichert type of 0 to 10 for example) for pluses and minuses. This will allow for even greater precision.

Sample Matrix
Topic: Vehicles

	Features						
words	2 wheel	4 wheel	motor	passen-gers	en-closed	handle bars	rubber tires
bicycle	+	-	-	+	-	+	+
motor-cycle	+	-	+	+	-	+	+
car	-	+	+	+	+	-	+
skate-board	-	+	-	-	-	-	-

After this task has been completed two more activities occur: 1) the children may be asked to suggest more words that share some of these features (tricycle, bus, go-cart, or even ship, train, airplane) and, 2) to suggest more features shared by some of these words (3-wheeled, steering wheel, licensed, land, sea, air, tracks). Unless you have enormous chalkboards or lots of paper in your room, you will likely run out of space or time before you will run out of features or words. Next have the children complete the remainder of the matrix by adding pluses and minuses. Finally, help them discover that no two words have the identical pattern of pluses and minuses, thus, no two words are identical in meaning. With even the most synonymous pairs or clusters of words the pattern will eventually become different once enough semantic features (either class, example, or property relations) have been listed. In addition to discovering the facts of the uniqueness of words, children learn new words within a category and new semantic features they perhaps had not thought about. Group discussion of the words and their features is vitally important.

Children asked to list the semantic features of the words carrot might very quickly mention "something to eat," "something to cook," "something to chew" but eventually might add "something to plant," "something to sell,"

"something to cut," "something to buy," and so on. In other words, they begin to discover what they already know but hadn't immediately thought of, and they begin to view words in more complete and precise ways.

The following "work sheets" are representative of the kind that you can easily construct to use as the initial part of a group activity or as independent activities, perhaps found in a learning center on word classification. Dittoed copies of blank grids, similar to that on the previous page should be available near the semantic feature sheets. It is imperative, though, that once a child has worked through the process independently, the matrix must be discussed and expanded through group discussion. In this way children learn new words and new features for words from one another. This is a critical aspect of the procedure.

Semantic feature charts can be constructed with any categories of words. I recommend beginning with categories that are concrete and within the experience of the pupils and then progress to more abstract or less familiar categories. Beginning categories might include:

games	vegetables	pets
occupations	food	clothing
tools	buildings	animals
plants	vehicles	sports

Later categories could include:

moods	sizes	entertainment
feelings	shapes	machines
commands	modes of communication	musical instruments

The categories of words in our language would comprise a lengthy list as would the words and features within many categories.

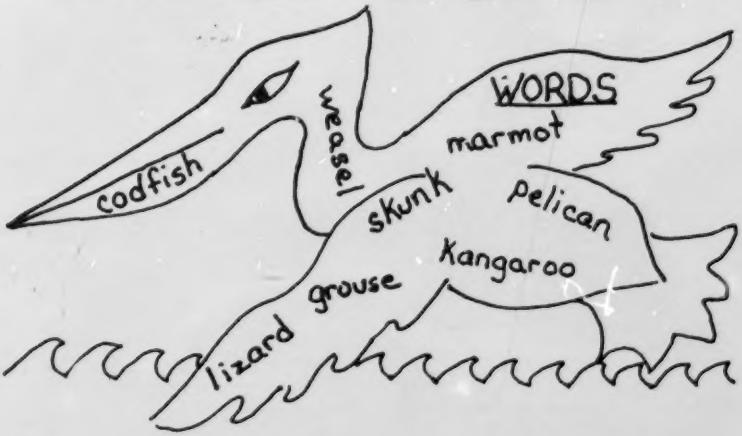
In summary, semantic feature analysis involves the following steps:

1. Select a category (vehicles).
2. List, in a column, some words within the category (bicycle, car).

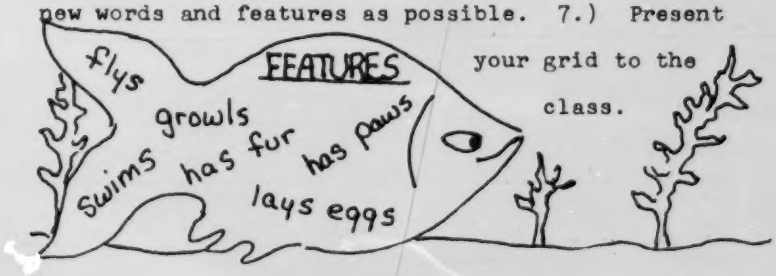
Directions: 1.) Pick up a grid and marking pen from your teacher. 2.) List the words on this card and more of your own on the left side of the grid. 3.) List the features along the top of the grid. 4.) Place a (+) by each feature that a word possesses. 5.) Place a (-) by each feature that a word does not possess. 6.) Add as many new words and features as possible. 7.) Present your grid to the class.

Directions: 1.) Pick up a grid and marking pen from your teacher. 2.) List the words on this card and more of your own on the left side of the grid. 3.) List the features along the top of the grid. 4.) Place a (+) by each feature that a word possesses. 5.) Place a (-) by each feature that a word does not possess. 6.) Add as many new words and features as possible. 7.) Present your grid to the class.

ANIMALS



Directions: 1.) Pick up a grid and marking pen from your teacher. 2.) List the words on this card and more of your own on the left side of the grid. 3.) List the features along the top of the grid. 4.) Place a (+) by each feature that a word possesses. 5.) Place a (-) by each feature that a word does not possess. 6.) Add as many new words and features as possible. 7.) Present your grid to the class.



3. List in a row some features shared by some of the words (two-wheeled, motor).
4. Put pluses or minuses beside each word beneath each feature.
5. Add additional words.
6. Add additional features.
7. Complete the expanded matrix with pluses and minuses.
8. Discover and discuss the uniqueness of each word. This is crucial.
9. Repeat the process with another category.

As children gain experience with semantic feature analysis they will begin to see that some words share the same features but vary in the amounts of degrees of that feature. (Both illnesses and diseases are serious, but diseases are more serious.) At that time you may want to switch from a plus (+) and minus (-) system to a numerical system (0 = none, 1 = some, 2 = much, 3 = all) so that greater precision can be attained. (E. g., in the preceding grid, bicycle received a minus (-) under motor which would equal a 0 (none). However, now that Mopeds are around, it would be more accurate to put a 1 (some) under motor.)

Semantic feature analysis works with learners of all ages, preschool (as an oral activity) through college. It is a powerful procedure to use with content area materials as well as with intensive vocabulary instruction. If you try it, I think you'll like it!

References

Johnson, Dale D. and Pearson, P. David. Teaching reading vocabulary. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978.

Davis, F. B. Fundamental factors of comprehension in reading. Psychometrika, 1944, 9, 185-197.

*Editor's Note:
The sample worksheets were provided by Lynn Kepper of the Oregon, Wisconsin Public Schools.

Highway Survival Vocabulary List

by

Judith B. Schaumberg
Reading Specialist
Burleigh Junior High School
Brookfield, Wisconsin

Any one of many overlapping and interacting causes may lie at the root of a student's inability to learn to read. These causes may be as nebulous as emotional disturbances, as identifiable as physical disabilities or as indefinite as educational deficiencies. The teacher concerned with the teaching of survival reading skills no longer searches for the etiology of the reading dysfunction. Rather, the job is one last effort to provide the student with those minimal skills which will allow him to survive in a world which surrounds him with printed messages.

Teenagers who find themselves in the position of needing survival reading skills instruction are often reluctant to acquire the usual sight vocabulary bank that reading teachers consider basic to reading. After years of failure, the teen might respond, perhaps out of desperation, to something relevant.

Most junior and senior high school students have inherited the American affection for the automobile. They look longingly at cars passing on the roads, give their undivided attention to the driving habits of their parents, dream of getting their licenses, and aspire to car ownership. Reading teachers can capitalize on this intrinsic motivation of their students by teaching them a Highway Survival Vocabulary List.

Even in our current movement toward international, pictorial highway signs, our expressways and streets carry

an enormous number of printed messages. This list of eighty-two terms and phrases which appear on highways was compiled in a very short period of time, just through observation of road signs. The driver unable to decipher these messages may at least miss his exit or at worst find his car buried in a construction site.

Highway Survival Vocabulary

EMERGENCY STOPS ONLY
JCT (junction)
LEFT TURN ONLY
NO LEFT TURN
NO PARKING
NO RIGHT TURN
ONE WAY
RIGHT TURN ONLY
WRONG WAY
TOLLWAY
PAY AHEAD
DANGER
NO LEFT TURN ON RED
NO RIGHT TURN ON RED
NO TURNS
NO PASSING
EAST
WEST
BUMP
SIGNAL AHEAD
YIELD
ROAD CLOSED
DEER CROSSING
DENSE FOG
WAYSIDE
HISTORICAL MARKER
THRU TRAFFIC
MEN WORKING
RAILROAD CROSSING
NO U TURN
LOW CLEARANCE
INTERSTATE
NEXT RIGHT
DIVIDED HIGHWAY ENDS
HOSPITAL
NEXT RIGHT
GAS FOOD AND LODGING
MINIMUM SPEED LIMIT
SOUTH
DIP
STOP
SLIPPERY WHEN WET
LANE ENDS
EMERGENCY VEHICLES ONLY
SLOW CHILDREN
NEXT EXIT
REST AREA
BYPASS
RIGHT TURN ON ARROW
FALLING ROCKS
SLOW SCHOOL ZONE
DO NOT LITTER
EXIT
NORTH
PARKING
SPEED LIMIT
ENTER
TWO WAY TRAFFIC
DETOUR
BIKE CROSSING
ROAD CONSTRUCTION
NO TRUCKS
HILL
PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
FREEWAY ENDS
CATTLE CROSSING
BIKE ROUTE
ENTRANCE
MAXIMUM SPEED LIMIT
MERGING TRAFFIC

EXACT CHANGE ONLY
NARROW BRIDGE
ONE LANE BRIDGE
ROAD CONSTRUCTION
UTILITY WORK AHEAD
ROUGH ROAD
MERGE
SLIPPERY
PASSING ZONE
COUNTY HIGHWAY
SLOW TRAFFIC USE RIGHT LANE
ONCOMING TRAFFIC USES CENTER LANE

Thorough teaching of the highway survival terms can be accomplished with a four step process.

Original Signs - Present the student with the signs in their original form. (Most of them can be found pictured in driver training texts and manuals.) This initial stage can act as a diagnostic session. Those signs which are consistently and accurately identified by the student can be noted and put aside until later steps in the process. They should not, however, be considered a part of the student's sight vocabulary. In many cases, students are able to arrive at the meaning of these signs from clues such as shape and color. They may not actually be reading them.

Typed Cards - The second step in teaching the Highway Survival Vocabulary List is to type each message on a separate card. Clues such as color and shape are removed from this presentation. The student is now forced to read the message that each sign has presented. These cards can be used and reused for practice as can any other flash card. Since most signs are printed in all capital letters, it is best to use CAPS on typed cards.

Isolated Words - Type another set of flash cards. In this set, put just one word on each card. Again, some of the additional, context clues to meaning are removed. The student must now learn to identify each of the words that are used in the Highway Survival Vocabulary List.

Tachistoscopic Practice - Since speed of recognition of these highway messages is essential when traveling in a car, practice with a tachistoscope is desirable. A simple hand tachistoscope can be made by typing the isolated words in a list. Two cards can be held and moved down the list rapidly opening and shutting over each word in turn.

The Highway Survival Vocabulary List mastery can be a step in the teaching of survival reading skills. Other survival vocabulary lists that can be used are available from publishers. Still others are waiting to be formed and taught. Consider a machine survival vocabulary list that would be formed of words and phrases that would enable a student to use vending machines with confidence. Other possible lists might be formed for restaurant words, pharmacy terms, or consumer items.

Making Vocabulary Interesting for Secondary Students

by

Dr. Mary Bigler
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, Michigan

The importance of vocabulary development can not be overstated. It is crucial to reading comprehension and effective communication. A most effective way for teachers to help students expand their vocabularies is to create interest in words. Below are some materials and activities that may spark interest among secondary students.

Books for Building Vocabulary

Many books can enrich your vocabulary building efforts. Students are intrigued with the idea that our language is a living, growing and changing entity. Consulting books like 6,000 Words (Gilman and Pease, 1976) will reveal some familiar words that have been coined in recent years such as cloning (growing identical things from a single cell), bionics (solving engineering problems with biological information) and cryonics (freezing the dead). Students may want to coin their own new words (LeMac--a French hamburger) or redefine existing words (dumpling--an apprentice garbage collector).

Poplollies and Bellibones (Sperling, 1977) traces the meanings of words that are now extinct. The words are featured in contexts as they were probably used originally. A Hog on Ice (Funk, 1948) and Horsefeathers (Funk and Funk, 1958) help students see the way words change over time. This may lead to a discussion of slang and the recognition that some slang words have become part of standard English such as joke, snob and shabby. Some students will enjoy compiling slang dictionaries and others

will enjoy researching to compile lists of slang words that are now standard fare.

Word Watcher's Handbook (Martin, 1977) explains that one should say "come to see me" rather than "come and see me". The Book of Lists (Wallechensky, Wallace and Wallace, 1978) has a chapter on communication that contains "10 Words You Can't Pronounce Correctly," "The 13 Longest Words in the English Language," "12 Most Commonly Used Words in Written English" and other unusual lists that stimulate the natural curiosity of many students. A Plentitude of Word Games (Lake, 1973), Jest in Pun (Keane, 1963) Droodles (Price, 1953) and The Mad Book of Word Power (Brandel, 1973) are other books that contribute to student involvement with words.

Word Games and Activities

There are many commercial word games that can provide challenge and entertainment in your classroom. Boggle (1973), Junior Scrabble (1973), Password (1962), Perquackey (1970), Spill and Spell (1957) and Scrabble (1971) are games that can be used to advantage in the classroom. They introduce new words as well as reinforce the spelling and meaning of old or forgotten words. Most of these inexpensive games can be purchased from toy or department stores.

Students enjoy the excitement of composing, discovering, or solving some of the following:

1. Palindromes--A palindrome is a word, phrase or sentence that reads the same backward as forward. For example, "noon," "some memos" or "Was it a cat I saw?"
2. Hink Pinks--Hink Pinks are one syllable words that rhyme and fit a description. For example, an overweight feline is a "fat cat." Hinky Pinkies are two syllable words that rhyme. A glad father is a "happy pappy." Hinkity Pinkities are three syllable words that rhyme. Mr. Carter's home therefore, would be the "President's residence."
3. Wacky Words--Wacky Words are words that are written in a way that conveys something about their meaning, such as

To help students understand abstract words such as freedom, pessimism, hope etc., ask them to make a metaphor by using concrete definitions. Some examples follow: foolishness is arguing with your parents; authority is a leaded gun. Some students may enjoy illustrating these definitions and then seeing if their friends can identify the word they have pictured.

A task to help students realize that words have more than one meaning one might have the student choose a word, look up its meanings in a dictionary and then illustrate the various definitions. A seventh grader illustrated the definitions of tongue by dividing his paper into eight squares. In each square he drew a picture representing a different use of tongue. His illustrations included drawings of a tongue of land, a tongue of a shoe, a tongue in a bell, languages illustrating a tongue that one speaks, a tongue of a belt, people speaking in tongues, a tongue of a wagon, and the tongue in one's mouth. Some students who are unable to use the dictionary may at least grasp the concept that words have more than one meaning by looking at these papers.

Displaying lists of words in your classroom is a technique for expanding vocabulary. Encourage students to seek alternatives to commonly used words by having them pick a synonym from a "Said" list under which the words commented, stated, explained, told, replied etc. may be listed. A "Color" list may introduce such words as magenta, chartruese, turquoise etc. A "Size" list would include miniscule, mammoth, minute etc. Word list displays facilitate expansion of not only the understanding of vocabulary but the use of otherwise sophisticated words. In this way words move from membership in the student's passive vocabulary into active use.

It is hoped these ideas will provide some additional stimulation to the secondary teacher's vocabulary program and will assist students in developing a consciousness of words that will help them in their academic careers.

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Word Lists: Beyond the Old and the New

by

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Idea Direction

The first part of this article compares the Dolch list and five recently published word lists to the American Heritage Intermediate Corpus and the Kucera-Francis Corpus. After practical considerations and limitations in the use of word lists are discussed, suggestions for future research are presented. It is hoped that such research will offer strategies to help students effectively learn words.

Background Information

In recent years there has been a proliferation of new word lists. The motives for developing the lists vary; nevertheless, a good many of them are aimed at replacing the Dolch basic sight vocabulary of 220 words. Dolch (1936) published his list in the 1930's after he examined three word count studies conducted in the 1920's.

Recent objections to the Dolch list have generally focused on two areas. First, some have argued that the vast number of cultural changes that have occurred since the Dolch list was first published make it passe. In a

recent study, Johnson (1971) noted that nearly one third of the Dolch words were not among the 220 most frequently occurring words in materials intended for adults. Second, educators have challenged the basis upon which Dolch compiled his list. Otto and Chester (1972) have characterized Dolch's research as "pseudo-empirical" because of the method he used to compile his now famous list of sight words.

To investigate these claims, Johns, Edmond, and Mavrogenes (1976) replicated the original Dolch study and checked the 220 words for their currency in two recently published word count studies. Some discrepancies were found between the replication study and Dolch's investigation: a few words were left off the list although they apparently met all his criteria for inclusion; and a lack of consistency was noted in Dolch's choices for including words on his list. It was concluded that "pseudo-empirical" correctly describes Dolch's method for compiling his basic sight vocabulary. It was also determined that his list is still viable since it accounts for over 50 per cent of the words currently used in reading materials for both children and adults. From these findings it would be very difficult to argue that the Dolch list is passe. In fact, it may be more appropriate to investigate how some of the new word lists compare to the Dolch list and recent word count studies.

Procedure

To carry out the study, five word lists (Harris and Jacobson, 1973; Hillerich, 1974; Johns, 1976b; Johnson, 1971a; Moe, 1973) published since 1970 were compared to two very large word count studies compiled within the last decade.

The first large word count was contained in the American Heritage Intermediate (AHI) Corpus compiled by Carroll, Davies, and Richman (1971). The AHI Corpus was derived from samples of school textbooks and other instructional materials used in grades three through nine (1972). It contains 5,088,721 words drawn in 500-word samples from 1,045 texts. There are 86,741 different words in the Corpus. Although the AHI Corpus "...reflects neither the vocabulary that the students know nor the vocabulary that

the authors imagine they should know," (1971, p. vii) it does indicate the vocabulary to which they are exposed. By comparing the words in the AHI Corpus to each of the five word lists, it was possible to determine the number and percentage of words on each list that occurred in the instructional materials to which students are exposed in grades three through nine.

The second large body of words was compiled from published materials "...representing the full range of subject matter and prose styles, from the sports page of the newspaper to the scientific journal and from popular romantic fiction to abstruse philosophical discussion" (1967, p. xix). The Kucera-Francis Corpus contains 1,014,232 words drawn in 500 samples of approximately 2,000 words each. There are 50,406 different words in the Corpus. By comparing the words in the Kucera-Francis Corpus to each of the five word lists, it was possible to determine the number and percentage of words on each list that occurred in so called "adult" materials.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 contains the results of comparing each of the five word lists to the American Heritage Intermediate (AHI) Corpus. A comparison of the Dolch list to the AHI Corpus is also included. Table 2 contains the results for the same word lists when compared to the Kucera-Francis Corpus. Each table contains the proportion and percentage of words from each list in the two large word count studies.

The interpretation of these results is more of a matter of making value judgments than basing conclusions on the data. Since each word list contains a different number of words, it is difficult to select the "best" word list. Perhaps a better question would be: Which list is best for what purpose? The answer to this question will vary according to the purpose(s) the user has in mind.

Table 1

Recent Word Lists and the Proportion and Percentage of Words Accounted for in the American Heritage Intermediate Corpus

Word List	Proportion of Words from List in Corpus	Percent of Words from List in Corpus
Dolch, 220 words	2,803,520	55.09
Harris & Jacobson		
58 pre-primer	1,565,964	30.77
63 primer	607,950	11.95
212 first reader	802,804	15.78
333 total	2,976,718	58.50
Hillerich		
190 starter	2,859,019	56.18
50 additional	126,258	2.48
240 total	2,985,277	58.66
Johns, 226 words	2,893,164	56.85
Johnson, 306 words	3,009,519	59.14
Moe, 100 words	2,397,719	47.11

Table 2

Recent Word Lists and the Proportion and Percentage of Words Accounted for in the Kucera-Francis Corpus

Word List	Proportion of Words from List in Corpus	Percent of Words from List in Corpus
Dolch, 220 words	518,871	51.16
Harris & Jacobson		
58 pre-primer	295,911	29.17
63 primer	110,544	10.90
212 first reader	139,787	13.78
333 total	546,242	53.85
Hillerich		
190 starter	553,604	54.58
50 additional	21,271	2.10
240 total	574,875	56.68
Johns, 226 words	537,913	53.04
Johnson, 306 words	578,427	57.03
Moe, 100 words	464,884	46.83

Another problem in selecting the "best" list concerns the differences in the percentages themselves. Consider, for example, the percentages from Table 1 for the lists compiled by Dolch (55.09%) and Johns (56.85%). The latter list accounts for almost two per cent more running words than the Dolch list in materials commonly used with children in grades three through nine. Even though this difference was shown to be statistically significant (Johns, 1976a), it would be stretching one's common sense to effectively argue that there is any practical difference between the lists. The Johns list may be more up-to-date if one employs the criterion of recentness in compiling word lists; however, the practical difference is nil.

Future Directions

Teachers should realize that all the recent fervor over word lists is, at best, misdirected. Besides, word lists quickly reach a point of diminishing returns. One could generalize from this study that each word list accounts for over fifty per cent of the running words in materials read by both children and adults (The Moe list is an exception; however, it contains only a hundred words while the other lists contain two or three times as many words). A more important question for teachers to ponder is whether teaching these words to students will enable them to become efficient and effective readers. The answer to the question is somewhat paradoxical. It is unlikely that students will become efficient and effective readers if they don't know the majority of the words contained in the six lists used in this study. On the other hand, knowing 220 or some other magic number of words will not insure that students will be good readers. Most reading authorities currently suggest that students should generally be able to recognize in excess of 90 per cent of the words in books that are used for instructional purposes. But how many different words would a student need to know in order to recognize 90 per cent of the words commonly met in reading. According to one source (Kucera and Francis, 1967), a student would need to know almost 8,500 different words! Clearly, then, teachers must view word lists in a larger perspective. That perspective should enable teachers to regard word lists as a means (not an end) to help students make meaning from printed materials.

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The Newspaper Route to Vocabulary Collection

by

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How do students become independent word collectors? How do teachers motivate them to want to collect new words, discover meanings by themselves, remember, and use new words?

Remedial readers at Sparta Senior High taught me the following: 1) don't assume we can recognize unknown vocabulary words without aid and practice; 2) don't assume we can automatically transfer context clue skills supposedly learned from a few contrived worksheets to real material; 3) don't assume we can recognize alternate word forms or correctly use a new vocabulary word just because we know its definition; and 4) don't assume that after only one day's exposure, we will retain new vocabulary.

However, students can become independent word collectors, provided teachers devote ten to fifteen minutes of class time three to five days a week to vocabulary study. This article explains why and how to incorporate the newspaper, the use of context clues, and review vocabulary in the regular vocabulary program.

The Newspaper

The teacher must use interesting material in order to create an interest in words. In addition to having at least one article that appeals to everyone, the local news-

paper has four other advantages. First, reading a newspaper promotes a lifelong habit of vocabulary growth. After high school, some students will continue to read books; very few (if any) will read vocabulary workbooks; however, most of them will read the newspaper. Second, newspapers continually repeat certain vocabulary. Not only does this reinforce learning, but it also makes students aware that they're mastering useful, "real" words. Third, using the newspaper as a resource for vocabulary development helps students appreciate the value of succint language. One student remarked, "If they mean 'said without proof' why don't they say it? Why do they have to use big words?" To my surprise, another student answered, "Because that takes three words, and 'alleged' is only one, and newspaper articles have to be short." Finally, the newspaper has a positive affective effect. After students finish their weekly vocabulary quiz, their test anxiety is quickly reduced by browsing through the newspaper for a few minutes. Have you ever witnessed a poor reader happily browsing through a traditional vocabulary book?

To initiate this project choose one or two articles that students will be anxious to read. Extract five to ten vocabulary words and write them on the board. Direct the students to the articles containing these words, ask a few motivational questions, tell them to read silently to answer these questions, and to notice the vocabulary. After the article has been discussed, instruct the students to locate the vocabulary words, read the sentences containing those words, and apply context clues to figure out definitions for the words. After all the words have been discussed, show the students how to copy the words in their folders (or vocabulary notebooks).

The Use of Context Clues

Context clues can be a major aid to vocabulary development. It would be too tedious and time-consuming for people to consult the dictionary every time they encountered an unfamiliar word. Therefore, worksheets containing examples of the nine types of context clues (direct explanation, experience, mood or tone, example, summary, synonym, comparison or contrast, language experience and words in a series) should help to increase student's confi-

A Word About Words

by

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The following are six strategies that underlie effective vocabulary programs. Such programs must:

1. Accent First-Hand Experience - Words, at best, are only symbols or labels for experience. When taught apart from experiences, they do not readily trigger images. Dramatization of words guarantees such experiences.

2. Promote Active Participation - To promote active participation, vocabulary programs must capitalize on the active role of discovery and pupil participation, as opposed to the inactive role learners play in traditional programs. The pupils must be searchers for information as well as receivers of information. Dramatization of words promotes discovery and active participation.

3. Guarantee Sensory Impression - Because imagery and perception are in the motor imitative activity of a child, motor activity plays the key role in the production of dynamic images. Dramatization provides sensory impression and guarantees pupil-generated visual images.

4. Involve A Multidimensional Use of Language - For a language arts program to be successful, the pupils must encounter words not merely on a receptive level (listening/reading), but on an expressive level (speaking/writing) as well. Dramatization of words involves this multidimensional use of language.

5. Utilize All Ways To Convey Meaning - Vocabulary programs cannot rely exclusively on words to explain words. Intonation, facial expression, gestures, etc., are invaluable

aids. So is explanation and discussion. Dramatization utilizes a variety of ways to convey meaning.

6. Personalize Meaning - Once pupils have attached meaning to a word, the word needs to be personalized for them. This personalizing is achieved by questions such as: Did you ever annoy anyone? Would you rather annoy someone or be annoyed? What pictures does the word annoy bring to mind? How do you feel when you hear the word annoy?

Vocabulary at the Tech School

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As to the importance of vocabulary instruction, we all concur; on how best to teach vocabulary we differ considerably, especially where the adult student is concerned.

The differences between adult students and children in school are considerable. Adults differ in their perception and use of time. Adults also bring a wealth of experience in working and living to class, and adults have different expectations concerning the role of "student and teacher." The adult may, and often does, bring views to the classroom different from those held by the teacher. Age changes the traditional student-teacher role model and technical school students reflect these differences.

The average age of students at Waukesha County Technical Institute (WCTI) is twenty-three. The students are working, probably on a second-shift job, and they are attending school to improve their station in life. Tech students have a keen perception of their needs. They demand educational objectives directed toward fulfilling those needs. Since vocabulary improvement is a vital area for improvement, instruction in vocabulary must be carefully planned to match adult perceptions of the course.

Therefore, to truly benefit our students, improve their verbal skills, increase their stock of words, help develop conceptual abilities, and improve reading skills, an instructor must carefully select the skills to be taught. Traditionally, the teacher chooses a word list. Whether teacher or commercially prepared, i.e. Word Clues or Basic Word Builder, any material designed around a word

list limits the student to the words selected by the author of the list. No matter how well chosen, any word list is, at best, only remotely related to the adult students' perceived or real needs. The question becomes, "How shall vocabulary study be made relevant to the students' lives?" The instructional task is three fold: first, determine what the student already knows and can do; second, ascertain student needs, interests, and vocational requirements; third, lead the student to the techniques and skills necessary for independent vocabulary growth. This paper will focus on the third task--how to develop a "do-it-yourself" vocabulary improvement program.

The Tech school program begins by abandoning the notion that one or two textbooks or commercially prepared kits should be the base of the program. Our text is the dictionary--any dictionary which contains the etymology of a given word. Some dictionaries are better than others, but having a variety in class is both helpful and constructive for comparison purposes. The dictionary becomes the vehicle for instruction in pronunciation, spelling, semantics, etymology, synonyms, antonyms, idioms, foreign terms, and abbreviations. Study of the dictionary eventually leads to a study of special dictionaries such as Roget's Thesaurus and all the special word books available in the library.

After reviewing special dictionaries, there is an inspection of as many commercial vocabulary texts, workbooks, paperbacks, and kits as the library, writing lab, and reading center can provide. The purpose of examining vocabulary materials is to learn the different approaches each "book" pursues in its effort to teach vocabulary. The student can then make judgments on the appropriateness of a book or kit to his or her individual needs.

A second source of instructional vocabulary material is the students themselves. Adult students bring a broad variety of experience and knowledge of language to class. They need only to be encouraged to share their knowledge and their questions to help others learn and to learn from one another.

A third source is the totality of printed matter available to us: newspapers, magazines, novels, documents,

and texts. Interesting vocabulary selections have been taken from as diverse selections as Smithsonian Magazine and comic strips. No teacher or student need be limited by the availability of source materials.

Packaged vocabulary programs typically attempt to teach either classic roots and prefixes, deriving meaning from context, or a combination of both approaches. There are many fine programs available commercially, but in our view, they are limited in scope. The Tech school program attempts to show students a broader variety of vocabulary building techniques, thus, enabling them to analyze meaning from every aspect--structure, context, or dictionary.

Adult students often enjoy the systematic "feel" of classic root study. While caution is exercised not to become overly literal, the student is encouraged to fully explore a given structural component. The study of opprobrium, for example, would lead to the word opprobrius and the synonyms infamy and disgrace as well as the antonyms laudatory and reputable. The search could include approbation, approbate, approbative, and the root of approve, the Latin probare, which means to prove. Curiosity, exploration, discovery are the keys to vocabulary growth.

Memory training, mnemonics, is the key to classic root study. Association, review, reinforcement, repetition, and recitation techniques are part of every class session. No Latin or Greek root or prefix is taught without an associative memory tag attached to it, plus a group of example words derived from it. Classic elements are not taught in isolation. Examples of the words in current use are drawn from daily materials.

Instruction in use of context to increase vocabulary follows instruction in classic roots and prefixes since knowledge of structure facilitates insight into solving meaning through context. Teaching context increases participation, self-expression, and a student's speaking vocabulary. Interpretation of the meaning of words in context helps to substantially enhance the verbal skills of Tech school students.

In addition to the dictionary which remains the basic "text," students are introduced to the thesaurus. Even though Tech school students are often unaware of the thesaurus, after a brief introduction to its organization and content, students become enthused over this valuable "word book." Games centered about substitutions for cliches', sentence revisions, expressive language, and quaint or unusual usage heighten interest in synonyms and antonyms, but the major objective is to reveal the usefulness, content, and makeup of the thesaurus. Many thesauri contain a glossary of foreign terms and serve as a springboard to understanding commonly used foreign terms. Whether studied in categories such as legal, medical, food, music; or by language grouping; foreign terms add spice to the vocabulary offering.

Vocabulary classes aim to teach students how to embark on their own vocabulary building venture. The strategies which are taught offer a lifetime of learning techniques for vocabulary improvement. Anything less constitutes mere rote learning and is soon forgotten.

Slanguage: Semantics for Teenagers

by

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It is well known that teenagers rejoice in communicating with a vocabulary sometimes undecipherable by adults. The purpose of a course in 'slanguage' is to utilize the unique vocabulary of teenagers to develop an awareness of the power of words. The strategy is to create an awareness in each student of how he communicates with his peers, his employer, and his family outside the school environment, and then develop skills to be able to handle well communication in all phases of his/her life.

In order to develop the student's interest in his own form of communication, a 'slanguage' unit might begin with non-verbal means of communication: signs and symbols found in the school and body language used by other students. Following this the teacher discusses HOW the students in school relate to each other verbally, and what types of phrases are used. A worksheet of "Sloppy Sounds" is effective to introduce current 'slanguage;' for example, "jeet jet?" "smor," "hlo," "luvya," and other jumbled comments point out how students handle the words at their command. Another effective activity to reinforce their awareness of semantics is to have students keep a diary of how many compliments and pleasant comments they hear, or give during a period of time. As the student discovers that most teenagers do not compliment each other, he also becomes more conscious of how members of the family treat each other. Another effective assignment is to have students give one compliment a day for a week to a friend or relative and note the person's reaction. It is surprising but necessary to comment here that most students quickly realize that people do not handle compliments well;

rather, they respond in a negative way. A good discussion should follow on why this is so.

The next phase of the class study of semantics is to introduce slang, its use, and how and why it is always changing. Helpful worksheets at this point could include old and new slang words and phrases. The "older" generation could be questioned, and a slang dictionary should be created in the class, using only current topical language. After the slang dictionary is complete, each student should be assigned to interview one adult over thirty years of age, asking that person to identify as many of the topical slang expressions found in the slang dictionary as possible. Tabulating the results is an exercise which will develop an awareness of a possible reason for the lack of communication between generations.

Following the creation of the slang dictionary, a study of euphemisms and their uses and effectiveness might be carried out. This is to develop in the student an awareness of the power and usage of the word found in print. Jokes, comic strips, advertisement, and political advertisements can be used for these exercises. Also effective is recreating menus using only euphemisms, or writing a job resume using euphemisms. These exercises will lead to the study of metaphor, and its use in print. The student's role as consumer should be discussed and identified, so that each student-consumer is able to "see" beyond the mere words to the power of the word in print.

The outcome of this study of 'slanguage' would be to create in the student an awareness of the power of words, both in the negative and positive way. Students soon realize that the 'slanguage' is often misunderstood in the adult world. They will be more alert to the fact that they are often targets for advertisers. The students can now successfully read or view an advertisement and see beyond the literal, superficial, initial impact of an ad. Not only can they learn the basic concepts of semantics, but are able to transfer this awareness to the power of language outside the classroom, in newsprint, advertising, and political campaigning. A good concluding exercise might be to have students bring in ads, articles, and campaign speeches and point out the use of words which are euphemistic, metaphorical, or designed to disguise the true meanings.

A 'slanguage' course can be valuable for all students. Activities can be created to appeal to students at all ability levels and students will appreciate language as a tool to project their own image. Making students aware of the power and effect of language can be exciting for both teacher and student.

Membership Committee Reports

Educators often join several local reading councils, The Wisconsin State Reading Association, and The International Reading Association. Why join so many? Educators like to keep in touch with the trends in reading and to be informed of all the reading "happenings" around the country.

Most educators feel they need to belong to a professional organization in order to maintain their professionalism.

WSRA and IRA have professional journals which contain informative articles, new ideas, and a list of the "happenings" in reading. The local councils have newsletters or journals which also contain good practical information.

WSRA works at state level getting legislative action for the improvement of reading, supports two reading conferences each year, publishes a quarterly journal, a newsletter, and a directory of reading professionals across the state.

WSRA maintains communication and involvement with the Right To Read Effort, the State Department of Public Instruction, and other agencies interested in reading.

Who joins WSRA? Educators, librarians, college students, retired educators, parents, and anyone interested in reading join WSRA.

You will want to join WSRA, too. If you are already a member, please remove the Membership Application from the center and give it to your school librarian or an interested colleague.

RESEARCH UPDATE:

Vocabulary and Memory

by

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The average child of ten has an estimated reading vocabulary of five thousand words. The average adult can read up to twenty thousand words. Why is it that a person can recognize a word and retrieve its meaning from memory in a fraction of a second? How is it that whole sentences can be comprehended at speeds much faster than the words alone can be read? The large memory capacity required in reading, combined with the high speed of the process, indicate that the human brain is truly an amazing instrument. (Norman, 1969)

Recent attempts by psychologists to explain how the brain takes in words, stores them in relation to each other, and calls them up at will, could shed some light on how teachers can help students to improve their reading vocabularies. Traditional psychologists starting with Ebbinghaus (1885) have argued that words are learned through their associations with other words. They found that meaningful words are easier to remember than nonsense syllables (Gibson, 1971). In addition, they found that words on lists which can be put into meaningful categories can be remembered better than unrelated words (Miller, 1965). Paired-associate experiments have shown that words which are learned with other words that are closer in meaning (nurse-doctor) will be easier to remember than words which are not as close (nurse-butter) (Meyer and Schvaneveldt, 1975). What all of these experiments show is that people remember words better when there is a strong association with other words in memory.

Collins and Quillian (1969) have suggested that the mind is organized in a hierarchical network where similar items, such as "pine - tree," are stored closer to each other in memory than dissimilar items such as "pine - flower." Thus, it would be easier to learn several words from a single category than a random list. This suggests that categorizing and grouping words would be a good activity for vocabulary building.

Episodic and Semantic Memory

Tulving (1972) proposed that memory is really divided into two distinct areas: episodic memory, or memory for events; and semantic memory, or memory for general definitions of words. Thus, a child's first impression of snow would be specific to that magic first snowfall, a particular sleigh ride, or a snowball fight. Eventually snow would become part of the child's general vocabulary, capable of being interpreted in new contexts such as "snowmobile" or "snow job." All new vocabulary words begin in episodic memory and the wise teacher will teach new words in the most vivid contexts possible. Extending vocabulary words to other related contexts will help to build meanings in semantic memory. After learning the meaning of "plane" in "plane geometry" the teacher could relate that to "airplane," the "plane" used in shop class, or a "plane surface."

Depth of Processing

Anderson (1976) argues that the likelihood of words being learned depends on the number of times they are repeated. Craik and Lockhart (1972), on the other hand, argue that the amount of attention given to new words, or depth of processing, is more important. They argue that merely repeating vocabulary words on a list would not be as effective as providing activities which draw the students' attention to the word in a dramatic context. Etymologies such as the origin of the word "hussy" in the Old Saxon "housewife" provide excellent opportunities for enhancing students' depth of processing of new words.

Imagery

A major controversy in psychology concerns whether people think solely in words, or in words and images. Pylyshyn (1973) argues that even though we may think that we think and dream in images we have to translate everything into a verbal code in order to think it. Paivio (1975) maintains that there are really two separate but connected systems located in different parts of the brain that allows one to describe objects or events, while the imagery system contains "holistic analogues" of the actual sights and sounds and smells. Levin (1976), for example, instructed students to use imagery while reading and found that it significantly improved comprehension. Regardless of whether people actually do think using one or two systems, getting students to imagine contexts for new vocabulary words would seem to be helpful. Just imagine sitting by a gelid cool icy stream up in the mountains.

Relevant Characteristics

A recent study by Johnson-Laird, Gibbs, and de-Mowbray (1978) has shed new light on the controversy surrounding whether a word is processed according to all of the elements of its meaning, or only those elements that are relevant to the context. For example, the word "milk" has all of the characteristics of the target category "consumable natural liquids," while "cake" or "oil" would only have two, "coal" would have one, and "bronze" none. Johnson-Lair, et. al. found that words on a list which contained all of the target characteristics were most likely to be remembered, but that even words with only one characteristic were more likely to be remembered than those with none. They argue that the amount of processing determines the likelihood of a word being remembered, and that the characteristics of words that are recognized depend on the context in which the words occur. These results would suggest that teachers should emphasize the various characteristics or definitions of a word in a number of different contexts. The word "apple" can be categorized according to its shape, size, color, flavor, nutritional value, use as a throwing object, symbolic value (as in Adam and Eve), as a gift for teacher, and so forth. When a word is encountered in a specific context students should be encouraged to examine which of its characteristics is

being emphasized. "Apple", in the sentence "One bad apple spoils the barrel," would be interpreted differently from "An apple a day keeps the doctor away." This study also suggests that "Twenty Questions" would be a good game for developing vocabulary.

Words in Their Contexts

A major psychological question is whether or not a word can even be considered to have any meaning apart from its context. Austin (1962) argues "To say that a word has meaning is to say that there are sentences in which it occurs which have meanings." Students may build up multiple definitions for a word through its use in a variety of contexts, but every time it is used a word will have a slightly different meaning. J. Anderson (1976) argues that sentences are processed word by word, according to associationist theory. R. Anderson and Ortony (1975), on the other hand, argue a more holistic approach: that the whole sentence is greater than the sum of its parts. According to them, words do not have fixed meanings. A person's knowledge of the world and the analysis of the context of a sentence affect the interpretation of a word in the context of the sentence. For example, the word "piano" is interpreted totally differently in "The piano sounded beautiful," and "The piano was too heavy to move." One important conclusion from this could be that vocabulary words should not be taught divorced from their context. Only by building up a number of contexts will a new word acquire a set of possible meanings for a student.

Schemata

More important is the concept of world knowledge, what Rumelhart and Ortony (1977) call schemata. Briefly, a schema refers to a person's concept of an object or an event. A restaurant schema would call up all sorts of associations with what goes on in a restaurant, while a "drive-in" schema would require a different set of expectations. According to this view, people do not learn vocabulary words, they develop increasingly complex schemata surrounding a word or concept. A child reading the word "courtroom" will have a far more meager

concept of the word than an adult who has served on a jury. All of this argues for direct experience through field trips and experiential learning in naturalistic settings so that children are able to relate words to experiences.

Conclusion

The experienced teacher may look over the suggestions for teaching vocabulary outlined in this article and say "So what? These are teaching techniques I have known and used for years." And it is true. Field trips, experiential learning, vocabulary in context, using imagery, vivid examples, and categorizing words may be part of any good teacher's repertoire of methods for advancing students' knowledge of words. What is significant is that psychologists have conducted research which helps to verify these assumptions, and gives teachers an empirical foundation to support their pedagogical decisions.

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PARENTS' SPOT:

Completing the Parent-Child-Teacher Circuit

by

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In the October 1978 issue of the WSRA Journal, Sandra Dahl, University of Wisconsin-River Falls, described how parents might enhance their children's language growth generally and provide readiness activities that will make it easier to learn to read when they get to school. This article focuses on what parents can do with their primary school child to stimulate communicating ability generally and reading ability specifically.

The authors chose the title to emphasize the belief that cooperation between the home and the school greatly enhances a child's learning to communicate. In order to "complete the circuit" of learning, therefore, parents must be included. Since parents are their children's first and most important teachers, what happens in school can get "short circuited" without the vital connections between the parents, their children, and their teachers. Many parents do not fully realize just how important they are to their children's success in school and in life. Learning begins at home with parents teaching children to live in their

small world. And even as children grow and enter school, parents remain their most important continuing teachers. Parents who, in a loving, supportive environment, teach their children, give approval for learning successes, and help them make use of what is learned in school, provide a firm base for the development of life-long learners.

Parents quite regularly ask, "What can we do to help our children succeed in school?" The question has wider implications because teaching and learning take place not only in the school building but in the home and in the community at all times.

Educators must reach out to parents to complete the circuit between home and school. Parents are often hesitant about helping their children in reading because they feel inadequate to do so or because they feel that what they do may interfere with what the teacher is doing in school. Parents must be told that the school staff values parental help and seeks their involvement not only with their own children's education, but with the school program as well.

Educators need to help parents understand that even "simple" activities such as talking with children when working around the house, going on shopping trips or short excursions are valuable learning experiences for children. Every activity provides an opportunity for children to develop a firm vocabulary (concept) base. Parent and children sorting socks by color, size, or pattern; or raking leaves into big, little, high, low, and round piles are learning experiences. Making a peanut butter sandwich is a good example of a simple activity that can be a learning experience. As the sandwich is being made, parents may talk about spreading the peanut butter from one corner to another corner, etc. They may ask questions like, "How many corners are there?" or they may talk with the child like this: "This is called a square. Now we'll put one piece on top. Would you like it cut in half or do you want it whole? I'll cut from one corner to the other corner. Now we've made a new shape. What is it? (Triangle). Let's count the sides." Many additional activities are described in Parents Are Teachers by Ruth Bowdoin (Wester's International Tutoring Systems, Inc.) as well as in many other current books and pamphlets written for early childhood programs.

There are many things that parents of primary school children can do that will enhance their children's chances of becoming successful communicators. The activities that are proposed here are directed at helping the child to read, but each also reinforces the other communication skill areas.

First, parents and, indeed, other family members should read to children. This is as true for primary and even intermediate level school children as it is for pre-school children. Reading to children, not only exposes children to a broader world, but also helps them to understand the rhythm of book language and familiarizes them with the structure of language. Researchers, in fact, have found that the most common characteristics of early readers is that they were read to regularly by parents or other family members.

Second, parents and other family members should do as much of their own adult reading, either required or recreational, as they can with, or in the presence of, their children. Children need to know that parents do read and that reading plays a valuable role in the home. Commonly, parents read the newspaper in their children's presence, but parents also read other material regularly and should encourage their children to recognize that they are engaged in reading recipes, ingredients on packages, directions on prescriptions or across-the-counter medicines, labels on cleaning fluids, TV schedules, bank statements, loan agreements, etc.

Third, parents should encourage their children to read to them and discuss what they have read. Children need an appreciative audience and they need to practice their oral reading in an environment that is not like school. The parent's role is to encourage children to read, not to correct or test. Although parents should not interrupt children if they miss a word, they should tell the words when asked for them. Parents should also encourage children to discuss what they have read and to paraphrase it if they are willing to share what they have read. This process can include both reading done in school and reading done at home. Some caution should be exercised here. Parents need to let children know that they are interested in what is read, but they shouldn't give the impression that home is just more of what children experience at school.

When children read to learn or to enjoy, they are also learning to read.

Fourth, parents should provide children with a variety of reading materials related to the children's own interests. Reading professionals are fond of saying that reading is the process of moving from the new to the known. Generally they are talking about language when they say this, but the statement is also true of children's interests. Children can read more difficult material if it is related to a topic they know. They are, of course, much more willing to read material if it is related to something they like. There are, for example, magazines related to popular children's programs such as "Sesame Street," Comic books are also available and children can read the pictures and learn to deal with sequence and other reading skills even if they can't read the words. If children are learning to swim, dance, or play a musical instrument, they can be exposed to simple biographies about people who are interested in the same thing. Librarians and teachers can help parents locate material related to children's interests. An excellent paperback resource is Nancy Larrick's A Parent's Guide to Children's Reading (Fourth Edition, Bantam Books, 1975, $1.95) which is available in most libraries and better bookstores.

Fifth, parents should provide their children with practical ways to use their reading ability. These as well as the other activities, help children develop their thinking ability. Although it is easier and faster for parents to tell their children what they "need to know", it is often more valuable to help children read the material themselves. For example, parents should let children attempt, with their help, to read the TV schedule rather than simply supply the information. Children should read and interpret the directions to games or for putting toys together. If the directions are too complex, parents should read with the child. Other practical uses of reading include reading recipes for making favorite desserts and directions for operating mechanical toys. Children like to feel useful and capable and parents need to help children engage in this kind of survival reading.

Reading is only one of the communication skills that children are learning in school and at home. They are

also improving their speaking and listening abilities and learning to write. A child's learning in each of these areas is affected by what he is learning in the other. In other words, in order to help children learn to read, it is also important to help them learn to write. Thus, when parents write notes to children, they are assisting the children to read. When they read notes that children write to them, they are assisting children in writing and at the same time serving as model readers for their children.

These are only a few of the many ways that parents can involve themselves directly and indirectly in helping their children become better learners. Currently, there are many efforts across the state and across the country to increase parental involvement in their children's education. Many of these efforts are focusing on communication skills, particularly reading. We encourage parents to contact their schools about ways they can become more involved. Additional activities may be found in the following sources:

A Guide for Better Reading for Parents and Children: a sixty-eight page paperback booklet of specific learning activities available for $4.95 from TAC, Inc., 8 Baird Mountain Road, Asheville, North Carolina 28804.

Helping Your Children Discover by Dorothy Schroepfer and Charles Yeaton, a twenty page pamphlet available free from the Wisconsin Right to Read, Department of Public Instruction, 126 Langdon Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53702.

Parents Assist in Reading-Primary and Parents Assist in Reading-Intermediate, two, eight page pamphlets describing things parents can do. Available from Milwaukee Public Schools, Reading Services, P.O. Drawer 10K, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201.

Succeeding in Reading: Questions Parents Ask About Reading by Carolyn Ferrell and Jean Merrell. A forty-one page pamphlet with many specific activities available for $2.50 from Educational Planning and Product Development Company, 7416 Twin Brook Circle, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421.

Your Child and Reading: How You Can Help. A fourteen page pamphlet available for 24¢ from Houghton Mifflin Co., 1900 S. Batavia Ave., Geneva, Illinois 60134.

*Editor's Note: A recent meeting of the Madison Area Reading Council on Parents and Reading provided some ideas expressed in this article.

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS:

Vocabulary Materials

by
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Materials to develop and expand students' vocabularies are numerous and many have proved very satisfactory. While it is understood that some materials are better than others, it is well to remember that often the efficacy of any material is relative to the persons using it. The materials listed below were highly recommended by the reading resource teachers recently surveyed. They are offered with the realization that the key to learning anything is a receptive student and an enthusiastic, skillful teacher who is able to provide inspiration and clarity.

Publisher	Title	Reading Levels
AMSCO School Publications, Inc. 315 Hudson Street New York, N. Y. 10013	Vocabulary Through Pleasurable Reading Volumes 1, 2 These consumable books are available in either paperback or workbook editions. Vocabulary is presented in many ways. Workbook edition $3.55 Paperback edition $3.15	4-7 Grades 7-12
Barnell Loft, Ltd.	Specific Skill Series: Using the Context A, B, C, D, E, F	1-6

Barnell Loft, Ltd.

Specific Skills Series:
Using the Context
G, H, I, J, K, L. 7-12

These booklets focus on using the context on each of the twelve reading levels. They have been used successfully in both developmental and remedial reading programs. ($1.75 each booklet.)

Word Theater 3, 4, 5, 6
Levels C, D, E, F

There are twenty-one Word Theater sets available. Each set contains 100 skits, instructions to the teacher, spirit masters for duplicating tests, and an answer key. The "cast" reads the skit, translates it into their own words, and dramatizes the vocabulary concept being presented. The "audience" attempts to tell the precise meaning as evidenced by the skit. Additional reinforcement activities are in the Teacher's Instruction Booklet. ($7.95 per set)

Dexter and Westbrook, Ltd.

Instructional Aid Packs:
Vocabulary Games
Tack On! A, B, C, D, E 1-5
Swap! A, B, C, D, E 1-5
Turn About A, B, C, D, E 1-5
Strike Out A, B, C, D, 1-5

Vocabulary "games" are packs of twenty-five to thirty-three 6 1/2" by 9 1/2" cards plus instructions to the teacher. The games can be used with the entire class or small groups of children. ($6.95 each Instructional Aid Pack)

Dexter and Westbrook, Ltd.

Supportive Reading Skill Series:

Mastering Multiple Meanings A1, A2	1
Mastering Multiple Meanings B1-B8	2

The focus of these booklets is to enable the student to determine the precise and subtle shades of word meanings as presented in the brief contexts. ($1.55 per booklet)

Supportive Reading Skill Series:

Understanding Word Groups A, B, C, D, E, F	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Understanding Word Groups Advanced	7, 8, 9

These booklets concentrate on meaning in terms of word groupings as well as individual words. ($1.55 per booklet)

Supportive Reading Skills Series: Word-O-Rama, Intermediate — 5-6

Meet the Monsters!
What's Your Phobia?
Just For Fun
Words Without Words

Word-O-Rama, Advanced — 7-9

Call the Doctor!
Oh, Those Manias!
Once Upon A Time Words
Words From Near and Far

Each booklet presents high-interest articles followed by insightful comprehension questions. ($1.55 per booklet)

Educational Activities Incorporated
c/o William Fenner
P. O. Box 25395
Milwaukee, WI 53225

Creature Features 3-6

The worksheets and cassettes in this kit emphasize sentence parts, prefixes, suffixes, etc. ($47.00 for five cassettes, ten activity books and teacher's guide).

Globe Book Company
175 Fifth Avenue
New York, N. Y.
10010

The World of Vocabulary Books 1, 2, 3, 4 — Reading Levels 3-6, Grades 9-12

The photograph-illustrations in these four workbooks are very appealing to older students. Through exercises that follow each story the student uses the key words in a variety of formats. ($2.40)

Media Materials, Inc.
Department 59b7
2936 Remington Ave.
Baltimore, Maryland
21211

Vocabulary Notes 7-9

The activities in this activity book/cassette kit focus on growth in word knowledge with emphasis on sentence parts, root words, prefixes, suffixes and context clues ($9.95)

Word Games 2-4

An activity book/cassette kit to sharpen word awareness through the use of codes, word puzzles and games. ($9.95)

Your Own Load of Words 2-4

The activities in this activity book/cassette kit emphasize the meaning of words in context, either oral, pictorial or written. ($9.95)

Systems 80 Borg Warner	Reading Words in Context A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L	1-5

These individualized lessons require the purchase or rental of a Systems 80 viewer/record player. The program may be used as a supplement to any developmental reading program or as a remedial program in the later grades. ($160.00 per kit)

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PROFESSIONAL MATERIALS ON REVIEW

Johnson, Dale D. and Pearson, P. David. Teaching Reading Vocabulary. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1978. (199 pages)

Reviewed by
Dr. James Raabe, Principal
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In two companion volumes, Teaching Reading Vocabulary and Teaching Reading Comprehension, Dale Johnson of the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and P. David Pearson of the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, have offered their ideas and viewpoints concerning the major topics needed for persons preparing to teach reading classes. The authors intend that the two volumes should serve as supplements to undergraduate and graduate courses in reading methods.

Establishing the goals that the book should be "practical enough to be useful to teachers" and yet "provide a solid rationale for each of the topics included in the heart of the book," Johnson and Pearson present a clearly stated philosophy in Teaching Reading Vocabulary. The authors point out that teaching reading vocabulary involves two discrete, yet essential, bodies of knowledge: vocabulary development and word identification. Keying on these two topics, Johnson and Pearson present a number of subtopics pertaining to vocabulary development and a number of points concerning word identification. Not only do they present why the items should be taught, but they also offer suggestions on how each item can be taught. To impress upon the reader the fact that teaching vocabulary is a unified process and not one compartmentalized into separate skills,

the authors, in the final chapter, stress the interrelatedness and inseparability of the skills discussed in the book.

Although teaching reading vocabulary is to be considered a unified process, for the sake of discussion and explanation, Johnson and Pearson find it necessary to subdivide word identification and vocabulary development. Three chapters are devoted to each topic. Broad word identification topics presented are phonics, structural analysis, and contextual analysis. Under vocabulary development the authors include developing a basic sight vocabulary, expanding children's meaning vocabulary, and using references such as the dictionary and the thesaurus.

In the judgment of this reviewer, the authors met the two goals previously stated. Not only students in reading methods courses but also teachers in the classroom can find this book a handy reference. Many practical teaching ideas are presented. Perhaps at times too much space is devoted to examples of worksheets and wordstudy exercises which do not seem valuable enough to command the space of several text pages as they do. Many of the teaching suggestions have passed the test of usability through actual classroom practice although some of the suggestions seem to be too impractical for classroom use. Although the individual teacher may not agree with all the rationales and teaching suggestions presented by the authors, Teaching Reading Vocabulary will remain a valuable reference for ideas on teaching this all-too-often neglected topic.

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Parnwell, E. C. Oxford Picture Dictionary of American English. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.

Reviewed by
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Teachers of students for whom English is a second language might be interested in this 80 page, colorful picture dictionary containing over 2000 commonly used English words. While the majority of the pictured vocabulary is nouns, common English verbs, adjectives, and prepositions have also been illustrated.

The format of the book is simple. Each page or group of pages contains illustrations concerning large topics such as the world; recreation; business; shopping; time, date, and temperature; adjectives; prepositions; plus many other categories a new speaker of English may need to know. On the illustrations are numbers of the items being depicted. The words matching the numbers are found at the bottom of the page. There are no written definitions in the book. All meanings must be deduced from the pictures themselves. The book ends with a pronunciation key and an alphabetical list (with pronunciations) of all the words pictured in the text. This alphabetical list also contains information concerning where the word is pictured in the text.

The picture dictionary appears to be usable in two ways. Studying the pictures and the related words can be helpful for one trying to increase his vocabulary. Having a number of words related to a topic on one picture could help the pupil associate words of common usage. On the other hand, one could use the alphabetical list to find an unknown word, learn its pronunciation, and examine the picture to get a general idea of the word's meaning. To this reviewer that approach seems to be easier for a new speaker of English than trying to determine a word's meaning from a printed dictionary-type definition.

Persons planning to use this book might do well to consider two points which this reviewer considers weaknesses in the book. Some of the items pictured are too small for a person who does not know English well to be able to identify clearly. The other weakness is that while the pictures are perfectly clear to a native speaker of English, some may not be understood by a non-native speaker. For example, the pictures illustrating blunt (hatchet on log) and sharp (hatchet through log) could easily be misunderstood or not understood by a person who did not know what blunt and sharp meant before looking at the picture. In spite of these weaknesses, however, the Oxford Picture Dictionary of American English does appear to be a usable tool for the population it is intended to serve.

Herber, Harold L. Teaching reading in content areas. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1978. Second Edition.

Reviewed by

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Dr. Harold Herber demonstrates again why he has been the most significant contributor to the field of teaching reading in the content areas. The author completely reorganized the chapters of his first edition. New explanations, new procedures, and new materials to illustrate the procedures are added.

Dr. Herber offers some new chapters explaining background, purpose, and definitions of reading instruction in the content areas; prediction as an instructional strategy; assessment; and simulation by guiding and showing.

The first edition was a real breakthrough in teaching reading in the content areas. This second edition explains the concepts behind teaching the content areas more clearly for all teachers. The addition of the first two chapters which deal with definitions, significant problems, and promising solutions makes this whole book understandable.

The book is a good resource not only for reading specialists but also for classroom teachers interested in re-examining their techniques and adding new ideas.

Each year the editorial staff surveys its readers to find out "how we're doing." This year, in addition to questions about the organization of the Journal, our readers are being asked to help choose themes for the four issues for 1979-80 and to recommend persons who might be willing to submit a manuscript for possible publication. Since this journal is the WSRA's official publication, the active response to this evaluation effort allows the staff to produce a responsive, useful publication.

At the recent Regional Reading Conference in Cincinnati the editors of the Great Lakes' state journals met to discuss operations and mutual concerns. After the exchange of information, the editors agreed to meet again in Atlanta to plan for a regular sharing of expertise. Because every state in the Great Lakes Region has a state journal, the editors felt that such cooperation would extend the contents of the five publications to a greater audience. Although the WSRA Journal has often reprinted articles from other sources, a serious effort will be made to recognize significant contributions from the other Great Lakes states. The article by Dr. Jerry L. Johns, for example, which is reprinted in this issue first appeared in 1977 in The Michigan Reading Journal.

Suzanne Jund
Editor